

Intelligence Personnel Keep Kearsarge Ships Informed

By Mass Communications Specialist 3rd Class Scott Pittman

USS KEARSARGE, Red Sea (NNS) -- The ships belonging to Kearsarge Amphibious Ready Group (ARG) require vast amounts of intelligence to stay aware of possible maritime threats in the U.S. 5th Fleet area of responsibility (AOR).

The Joint Intelligence Center (JIC) is where intelligence personnel attached to amphibious assault ship USS Kearsarge (LHD 3), Amphibious Squadron (PHIBRON) 4, 26th Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU) and Tactical Air Control Squadron (TACRON) 21, collaborate to create an intelligence network that is ever expanding, and more defined as time goes on.

The JIC scans civilian media to find and disseminate to area commanders credible information regarding threats to ships or commands in the U.S. 5th fleet AOR.

"We provide indications and issue warnings, not only for the Kearsarge itself, but for all units associated with the Kearsarge ARG," Lt. William Barth, assistant intelligence officer for PHIBRON 4, said

JIC personnel keep the Kearsarge ARG and 26th Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU) chain of command informed of situations in the AOR and around the world. Intelligence reports created from local and international news, media networks, newspapers and the internet are given during the daily briefs.

"During the ship's intelligence briefs, we only cover pertinent information that would affect the ships of the ARG," Intelligence Specialist 1st Class Antonio Garcia, leading petty officer for PHIBRON 4's Intelligence Department said. "Our briefs help the chain of command make informed decisions about future operations of the ARG."

JIC draws personnel from a variety of intelligence organizations. JIC personnel are brought in from Navy Information Operations Command, a fleet intelligence detachment from Office of Naval Intelligence and the Naval Strike Air Warfare Center. These intelligence professionals come together and form one team aboard Kearsarge.

"We work with the ship, so we stand the same positions and watches they do," Intelligence Specialist 2nd Class Dynesha Scantling, the JIC manager said. They stand everything from JIC supervisor, a position that puts someone in charge of the intelligence personnel and equipment to different analyst positions, such as imagery analyst. This watchstander analyzes pictures provided by other sources. They can come from the front line, the signal bridge of the ship or media sources."

With so many individual pieces of intelligence that make up a larger picture that only the area commanders are aware of, JIC personnel don't always receive instant gratification from their work. Instead, they must appreciate how their job affects the ARG and the region as a whole. They don't always know what the information they have collected is in support of, but they understand that it benefits the overall mission.

Kearsarge is the command ship for the Kearsarge Amphibious Ready Group supporting maritime security operations and theater security cooperation efforts in the U.S. 5th Fleet area of responsibility

For more news from Commander, Amphibious Squadron 4, visit www.navy.mil/local/phibron4/.